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family & community

THE COMMUNAL--A VIABLE SOCIAL STRUCTURE? by Edward W. Wilson

Both here and abroad, as numerous periodicals report, the decline of the small community as the dominant social unit and the consequent disintegration of the family structure which supports it, coupled with the increasing importance of the alternative city structure, are giving rise to an increasing number of experiments in communalism. For the purpose of this article, communalism is considered to include those experiments which attempt to combine the functions of both the family and the community into a single structure. The concept is characterized, ideally, by a total absence of traditional family roles with the usual differentiation of biologically related groups. Economically, the communal operates as a single unit without private ownership, income, assets, debts, or liabilities. Considering that communalism is neither new nor previously successful in ongoing human societies, it seems prudent to consider whether or not this integration of function is possible. The intended purpose of this essay is the presentation of

...continued on page 3

LEAVING TWIN OAKS: Article reviewed by Griscom Morgan

The recent No. 28 issue of Communities magazine (Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093) features "An Interview with ex-members of Twin Oaks" community. It shows the evolution of thought and understanding of people who began with some of the current stereotypes of understanding about what commune, family, individuality and community should be. The diverse people interviewed together evolved through their experience in Twin Oaks to the point of their leaving with the desire for a more balanced, whole and, in my view, mature conception of life. It makes clear how much the Twin Oaks community life had meant to these people, with values they would hope not to lose even though finding the commune pattern itself no longer suited to their understanding and their needs. A few quotations from the interview give an idea both of the drift of this experience and of the value of the interview:

Freddie Ann: I feel that one of the basic premises of the Soviet Union, or China or Twin Oaks or any communal endeavor is that the group is smarter than the individuals. And I look at the

individuals at Twin Oaks or anywhere and I just see more individual smartness than I see group smartness. And yet the premise of the community is that the group is going to protect the individual from the individual's own ignorance. And because I don't believe in the group making decisions for everyone anymore, I'm no longer a believer in the common denominator.

Yes, we formed the child system that we ended up leaving.

* * * * *

David: So the crucial thing is differentiating between what you can do alone and what you should do with a group.

Freddie: And differentiating your principles... And that's what everyone else is deciding too...

Mary: ...And you can form different interest groups.

Warren: Cooperation is necessary... But not to the extent of saying 'I have to become that other person' or 'We have to compromise until our views are exactly alike.'

Mary: I think a lot of younger people come to T.O. with this idea of merging with the whole, getting real high on being part of this big group. I know I did, anyway. And now as you get older, there's this natural process of defining yourself and being able to pull away from the security of being part of this.

Sara: Well, the funny part is that as I get older, that's something I miss. Being able to identify with a group.

Freddie Ann: ...I had to define me, Freddie, and what I believed in and what my place was in the whole group. People in the group scenes at Twin Oaks prove their identity to the detriment of the group process. And, because it's so hard to establish an identity in the group, you get lost in it. Now I can run my kitchen, or my kids, but I don't feel like I come to a group with that same impulse to assert myself. I'm much more relaxed and ready to go along with anything.

Bree: Wow, it's really heavy to be disillusioned about that. Or maybe it's that I still believe it, but I'm going to have to find another way to do it."

* * * * *

Freddie Ann: One of the trends of thought at T.O. is 'the marriage relationship is totally outmoded, you should look to many people to fill your needs...

Sara: Yes, that was something I felt very strongly about. I really valued my relationship with Warren and with Lauren (the baby). I felt that we had the potential to be a family. But at T. O. we could easily fall out because (of the accepted norm).

* * * * *

It is significant that this development from experience at Twin Oaks is nearly identical to the views of D. H. Lawrence and Arthur E. Morgan we discussed in our Community Comments entitled "Wholeness in Interaction--an issue on how to relate all together while maintaining the integrity of each"--including a discussion of the importance of the family.

Wholeness in Interaction is available for \$1.00 (plus handling and postage) from Community Service, Inc.



THE COMMUNAL continued

what appears to be a highly significant, if nearly universally overlooked, evolution of social structure.

It seems reasonable to require that, in order to be considered a viable alternative to contemporary social organization, the communal must be capable of self-support, rather than operating parasitically on the surrounding society. It must also be capable of perpetuating itself and sufficiently flexible to accommodate considerable divergence in terms of size and opinion.

Consider the optimal conditions conducive to the evolution of the communal as the primary social structure. First, assume that the people involved are racially, politically and religiously homogeneous; imbue them with an intolerance of competitiveness and isolate them from any divergent groups. Next, make each individual vitally important to the group's survival and the group to the individual's. Locate this group in an extremely harsh environment and severely curtail both food and fuel supplies. In order to expedite the breakdown of the family unit, the infant mortality rate should be very high, life expectancy below 35 years with accidents being the primary cause of death.

The thrust towards communalism which the above conditions would produce is fairly clear. Basic social homogeneity should tend to reduce friction prone areas and render competition intolerable. By limiting food supplies, pooling will be encouraged in order to achieve optimum rationing potential. Fuel shortages in a harsh environment should promote the development of multiple "family" dwellings of minimal size. The lack of contact with diver-

gent groups should sharply limit the need for flexibility caused by intercultural contact.

The effects of the remaining conditions deserve somewhat closer scrutiny. Notice that isolating the group, in addition to reducing flexibility requirements, also renders it entirely responsible for its own propagation as members cannot be added or replaced by recruitment. By assuring a high mortality rate among both infants and adults, the pressure exerted on the traditional family group should be intense. Monogamous relationships would obviously result in a large number of widows and widowers of child producing age and an even greater number of half or full orphans. Group survival, combined with high mortality, renders the existence of non-childbearing adults intolerable. The social homogeneity required makes child differentiation between orphans and non-orphans undesirable. Also, the child's development should not be hampered by strong emotional ties to his or her biological parents; at least one of whom is certain to be unexpectedly lost with natural emotional upsets. How much better for the child to have his emotional needs fulfilled equally by the members of a large group.

By establishing the above perimeters, an attempt has been made to provide something approaching optimal conditions for the development of communalism. Since nothing approaching any of these conditions is to be observed in any contemporary communal experiment, it seems reasonable to conclude that, if the foregoing conditions do not evolve into workable communalism, neither will contemporary experiments. If that should be the case, experimentation can be more fruitfully expended in other directions.

It can, therefore, be confidently asserted that communals cannot and will not develop into more than highly temporary retreats for a limited number of individuals. This conclusion is based on a social evolution covering several thousands of years under conditions surpassing those previously described. The Eskimos of North America, Asia, and Greenland were not communal dwellers. Though occupying the most inhospitable and limited environments in the world, they not only survived, but thrived. Despite, or perhaps due to, the extreme precariousness of their lives, they were among the happiest and most contented people on earth.

It would be unfortunate at this point not to attempt some explanation of why Eskimo society developed an extremely integrated village structure which retained a monogamous family unit when the conditions imposed on them would seem to have discouraged this. The key here appears to be the necessary cooperativeness of the community's members. Notice that as the number of adults included within a single "family" group increases, the number of possible interrelationships with which each adult must cope increases rapidly. Thus, if a couple is considered to have one relationship between them, the addition of a third person increases this to three. As the number of intensive relationships with which he must deal increases, so does the amount of time and energy he must devote to these relationships. Hence, effort necessary to physical survival is diverted into non-productive or, more commonly, counterproductive relationship development and/or maintenance. It is likewise impossible to prevent the growth of rivalries with the consequent loss of the necessary cooperation and production.

It seems that what biologists have noted throughout the animal world applies equally to human communals. The general pattern in both cases indicates that excessive member interaction produces inner stress which progressively destroys precisely those characteristics which the communalists seek to enhance.

Thus, for those intent on social experimentation, it would seem that the communalist extreme could be dispensed with. It is not argued that the founders of a would-be communal cannot make it function in a limited or parasitic manner for varying lengths of time. But as a social structure capable of growth, flexibility or even minimal long range potential it will fail. Such has been the history of the numerous commune experiments over the past 200 years.

It would be beneficial to those wishing to study the community and social structure of Eskimo culture to refer to those books by Knud Rasmussen, Farley Mowat and Peter Frenchen listed in the bibliography. The methods employed by the Eskimos in meeting the conditions outlined in the article are beautiful in their formulation and execution. It is highly recommended that those contemplating small community development study these books for the possible ramifications to their specific projects.

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This is a paper presented to the Community Service conference, "The Community and Its Neighbors" August 7, 1971.

COMMENT ON "THE COMMUNAL" by Don Hollister

I agree with Ed Wilson's thesis that the melding of family and community is not viable. However, I think that his argument is weakened by his assumption that the only set of optimal conditions for such melding would be in a harsh physical environment. Would not the opposite extreme of wealth and luxury allow for the extra devotion of energy to multiple relations?

Although Ed Wilson is careful to use "communal" as distinct from "commune" I see an implication that his definitions of the two terms are interchangeable. Not all communes aim to "combine the functions of both the family and the community". In my own use "commune" describes an economic unit in which ownership and income is the group's.

COMMENTS ON "THE COMMUNAL" by Griscom Morgan

In response to Don's comments on Ed Wilson's article, I think the question is with regard to the survival value of different ways of life. What can happen for a short time in eras of great prosperity tends to be freedom from the test of survival, and what does not have survival value is weeded out by adversity that comes to all ways of life sooner or later. Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares depicts the role in nature and history of the eras of difficulty beyond which the unfit do not survive--"the days of judgement". What Ed was describing was the overall judgement of history, not the ephemeral periods during which the "tares" or ways of living that defeat

survival can have their brief period of disorientation.

A GOOD FAMILY IS THE SECRET
By Stanley Hamilton

In August, 1934, Arthur E. Morgan, Quaker, humanitarian, educator, first director of the TVA, and one of the great figures of this century, was teaching a short course at Manchester College. He was conducting studies for a group of young men who were scheduled to go to China for work in rebuilding and relief. These were Civilian Public Service men. Morgan at that time was a member of the board of the Rural Life Association, a small organization of Brethren, Friends, Mennonites, other Protestants, and a number of Catholic laymen and priests. This group was organized out of concern for the family farm and the small community.

I visited the class in one of its sessions and afterwards spent time talking over some problems of this association for Arthur Morgan was quite active in its affairs. After we had talked over the business about which I came to see him, we sat under the oak trees outside the administration building. It was a hot day and we were glad to be there where there was a little breeze. I said to Arthur, "What do you make of this school? It began as an academy; it has been a college for less than 50 years. It has been accredited only some 11 years (by the North Central Association)."

I continued, "Yet, although there isn't much ivy on the walls, out of here have gone some very great people." I named about 15 of them, including Dr. I. W. Moomaw and his wife Mabel, agriculture missionaries in India; Anna and Baxter

Mow, missionaries in India; William and Esther Beahm, who had been missionaries in Nigeria; Kermit Eby, teacher, union leader with great strength and respect and moderate views; Andrew Cordier, who had taught at the College, then worked in the State Department and later became administrative assistant to the first three secretaries-general of the United Nations; Dan and Lucy West--Dan was an active worker in the Church of the Brethren and for some time had directed youth work and youth camps. He was the founder of and most active in Heifer Project, which is now Heifer Project International, one of the great relief projects that followed World War II.

Arthur sat silent for a few minutes and then said, slowly and thoughtfully, "Yes, I know many of those you have mentioned and they are great people. I think if you will investigate you will find that they came from strong, rural homes. What they are, they were before they got here. Now, the college may have helped them some. It didn't hurt them any. It may have brought them new skills. It may have polished them up a bit but I think, really, you will find that they came from rural homes, good families, well grounded, and what they are, they were before they got here."

Over the years, as I have reflected on this conversation and, as I know these people, I have decided that Arthur was right. Those people did come from good families--hard-working, frugal, closely-knit families. In these days of turmoil and testing--when so many people are trying out what they think are new things--if they would reflect, they would find out that some of their experiments are far from new. They may be as old as the human race. For

a long time people have been experimenting how best to carry on relations between men and women and what to do about the children and, so far as I have been able to discover, the good family is the best thing that has come out of all the experimentation.

In the past decade, of course, there has been great unrest and turmoil in the student ranks of all our colleges and universities. The strength of Manchester College, and of all church-related colleges, especially Brethren, Friends, and Mennonites, has derived from the attachment, the close relationship between the colleges and the families from which the students came. One college president once remarked to a complaining parent, "Well, all we have to work with is what you send us."

I have many friends who are now and have been college teachers. Often as I have told this story about Arthur Morgan and his remarks at Manchester College, some have been a little resentful. They are certain that college has been the great factor in developing and sending forth some great people. That may be true. Often, it is. But it may be good to remember what Arthur Morgan said, "They came from strong rural families and what they are, they were before they got here."

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COMMENTS ON FAMILY AND COMMUNITY by Griscom Morgan

Over a period of scores of thousands of years for hundreds of thousands of societies in any era mankind has experimented with countless forms of family, community and sexual relationships. Out of that long experience it is noteworthy that two universals have endured. As Arthur Morgan introduced his little pamphlet "Community, a Universal of Human Society",

A ten year survey of human societies, made by the Yale Institute of Human Relations reported by George P. Murdock, found: 'The local community is a universal social group. It shares with the nuclear family--and it alone--the distinction of being present and functionally significant in every one of the thousands of societies known to ethnography and history, from the simplest primitive culture to the most complex modern civilization.'

The nuclear family is the building block of the extended family, so it should not be thought that the nuclear family is in contradistinction to the latter.

If these two social groups are universals of human society, neither displacing the other, however much they may be interwoven, might we not say that a society that dispenses with them would almost be on the way to being a non-human society? Inhumanity could be expected to ensue. And that is precisely what we see in societies in which the nuclear family and the small community are largely disintegrated--as they are in significant areas of our modern cities. There ensues the mob, the gang, the equivalent of what Ed Wilson calls the communal in which stable continuity of the nuclear family and the small community both are gone and children become part of the larger crowd.

In one of the most important studies on the family, Zimmerman's Family and Civilization, published in 1947, the history of the family from past to present is carefully delineated. Zimmerman points out that the present "family decay (is) identical to that which preceded the complete nihilism of the great cultures of Greece and Rome.

"No modern work on the family ever suggests

this. It is evident that these sociologists do not even know their family history...

"The literary classes possess peculiar qualities of dogmatism and pervasive pressure upon public opinion unknown to any other social class... Most of its members are now convinced that the family is the hobgoblin of society.

"The solution... lies in the hands of our learned classes. There is a greater disparity between the actual, documented, historical truth and the theories taught in the family sociology courses, than exists in any other scientific field."

christian communities

CHRISTIAN COMMUNAL LIVING
by Leslie P. Fairfield. Summarized
and excerpted from the Living Church
5/2/76, p. 9, with permission, by
Margot Ensign.

One of the signs of renewed vitality in American Christianity is the emergence of new "intentional communities", or communal expressions of Christian faith and life. Within the Episcopal Church, household communities such as "The Mustard Tree" in California have a strong ministry to migrant youth. In Houston, Texas, whole parishes like the Church of the Redeemer have integrated communal life-style with parochial structure. Such communes represent a radical deviation from the prevailing pattern of American Christianity, where for the average layman the parish church is a Sunday filling-station rather than a life focus.

At first sight, today's Christian communes appear to resemble the communal movement in the secular counter-culture. All these represent ways of coping with a society that they see as

aimless, superficial and depersonalized. Most communes emphasize relationships rather than achievements or possessions. Goods and incomes are often pooled, which reinforces the intertwining of lives that lonely people long for.

It would be tempting to view Christian communes simply as ripples on the surface of American Christianity caused by forces outside the church. This would suggest that communal living is an eccentric strand in Christianity, not a normal expression of Christian life for the laity.

If it were true that the Christian commune is a response to a certain type of society, there ought to be major similarities in the past. There have been many communitarian groups in the 1900 years of Christianity: the monks of St. Benedict, the Franciscan friars, the Anabaptists. But these all emerged from different environments, and have no common thread throughout the centuries.

The First Wave

The church in Jerusalem in the first century was the model to which all later Christian communitarian movements would appeal. Though it is debatable whether this model served for all the churches in the eastern Mediterranean, and whether these groups actually held all their goods in common, they dispensed enormous amounts of charity: "How these Christians love each other..." Even hostile pagan critics had to admit that the poor, the widows and the orphans were cared for as one family.

This quality of communal caring won acceptance for the church in the crowded cities of the Roman Empire, where the little man felt lost and overruled

by politics from above. In the absence of local family or political ties, the early Christian communities filled the need for a new sort of family.

Then in the fourth century when the Emperor Constantine declared Christianity legal, the church came up out of the catacombs into the light of respectability, losing much of its zeal and communitarian spirit. Many believers, longing for the quality the church had lost, went out into the wilderness and desert, rejecting not only society but the worldly state-wide church.

The Second Wave

Gradually these desert groups of hermits came together, and the wilderness became the scene for the second wave of Christian communitarian activity. It was St. Benedict, an Italian monk in the sixth century, who built a pattern for the rural Christian commune which spread and populated Western Europe with hundreds of tiny Christian communities. During these centuries, after the fall of Rome, the barbarian West was a society of small closely-knit peasant villages, ridden by clan loyalties and blood feuds. Perhaps this helps explain why the monks and nuns felt they had to give up human kinship when they joined God's family.

The Third Wave--Growth and Expansion

Europe survived the dark centuries after the collapse of the Roman Empire and by the twelfth century had entered upon a phase of population growth and economic expansion. Towns and crafts grew and flourished. But the rural church of the Benedictine age found the new townsmen bewildering, even obnoxious. The monasteries had great lands, which meant great wealth. Too often now the monasteries and convents were cozy retirement homes for sur-

plus nobility, rather than models of zealous Christian community, and their devotional life had become habitual and monotonous.

The artisans and merchants were dissatisfied, critical and questioning of the old church. They thought the church ought to identify with the have-nots, rather than with their wealthy masters. They thought the Church should be a servant community, preaching the good news to the poor and answering the restless townspeople's needs for a more personal Christian piety.

So a third wave of Christian communitarian activity grew up, on the fringe of the established church and often harshly persecuted. Among these groups were the Waldensians of southeast France, the Humiliati of northern Italy, and above all the Franciscans. In contrast to the earlier Christian communes, these were highly mobile, teaching and preaching wherever they found the urban poor. All made poverty a central concern and most stressed celibacy. The environment in which they grew was a world of small towns, guilds, and family workshops, more sophisticated and mobile than the peasant villages yet more closely knit than the huge cities of the Roman Empire: they had their own distinctive environment.

The Fourth Wave

Then there arose a new wave, in the world of the reformation: the Anabaptists, who pooled economic resources, rejected a state church, denounced celibacy--thus including families in their communities--and saw themselves as the small "gathered" church of the saints. These radical reformers included Swiss and South German Brethren and the Dutch Mennonites. Most radical of all were the Hutterites, the fol-

lowers of Austrian Jakob Hutter, who were savagely hunted down because they were seen as a threat to the value system and the 'establishment' of Europe. But their commitment gave them the power to survive and flourish, as they have right down to the present.

The world of the Anabaptist communarians was mixed and varied, including university scholars, wealthy Rhineland merchants, peasants and craftsmen, and it had some features in common with the era of St. Francis. The doubt and confusion caused by the Reformation, along with the persistent small-town stability, gave the Anabaptists' wave of Christian communalism its own distinctive soil to grow in.

Conclusion

Present-day Christian communes also spring from an unprecedented environment: affluence, technology, mass education. Since through the centuries Christian communes have emerged and flourished in such different societies, one wonders if they really have been simply reactions to social stimuli. Something more than reaction is going on. Perhaps Christian communalism represents a goal to be reached in any setting, and the life-style of the Jerusalem church in the first century is a perennial goal to which God is calling his people.



THE CHRISTIAN HOMESTEADING MOVEMENT by Margot Ensign

Community Service has recently received literature from the "Christian Homesteading Movement" in Oxford, N. Y., which was founded in 1961 by Richard Fahey. In 1970 he married Anna Marie, and since then they have been working together, teaching people how to homestead:

There are two things most people notice about the Homesteading Center -- its peacefulness and the poverty of the Fahey family. Because of the Homesteading Center's lack of material goods people may well think: How can anyone teach with so little? After a while they begin to understand the fact that homesteading is not based on the acquiring or making things as much as it is a dynamic relationship with the earth and with God. ("Homesteading News", #15, April 1977)

The object is not only to teach successful homesteading, but also to form Catholic communities or villages where families own and operate homesteads with hand tools. Potential members simply complete a Homesteading Week and have an interview. But to become a member of this Movement "means working for a fundamental and profound change in your life". It is a commitment to a new way of life: "A member prepares himself for community by learning at the Homesteading Center and by changing his life in his home and in his heart."

Membership is of two kinds. Only Catholic men (family heads) can become regular members. Women and non-Catholics can become associate members. Behind this membership is a solid base of philosophy and goals: "We are

working on forming Catholic communities where men may strive to live their calling to be sons of God...communities where the root of a truly Christian social order--the stable family--will be encouraged and reinforced." The principles adopted include the following: voluntary poverty; an active Christian life and community; private ownership of land; hand skills; patriarchal family life and patriarchal village democracy; barter, to keep economic life simple and direct; and actively seeking good health of the whole person.

During "Homesteading Weeks", which take in a great diversity of topics, potential members may learn the necessary homesteading skills from the Faheys who act as instructors. In one week-long session, such as that on Basic Homesteading, the student is expected to learn skills as varied as how to raise goats, recognize medicinal herbs, and tell time by the moon and stars. Seven such weeks are held on a different topic each week, plus "Special Programs" which are free to the general public.

The goal of this endeavor is community:

When a minimum of twenty families is prepared we will begin a community. We expect this to take some time. Each member must be skilled at homesteading and have enough money to purchase some land. We expect to begin a community in several years.

For those interested in deeper commitment, a home and garden site of one acre will be given.

Though the Movement has been in existence for 16 years, there is as yet no community. It is indeed taking some time.

In conclusion, it is a little hard to separate in the Newsletters what has happened from what the founders would like to happen. It seems as though much of the thinking and action are still potential and in the conditional tense. It would help to know which courses are popular and what the results are. About how many people are involved in the Movement?

By today's thinking, there seems to be a definite anti-feminist bias: men are the heads of households; women may only be associate members; men vote in the village democracy; women are restricted in dress. The general impression left is that it is a very idealistic group; and despite its commitment to hard, solid work, it still seems to be in a somewhat fluid state.

odds & ends

ARTHUR MORGAN: A BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIR. By Walter Kahoe. Published by The Whimsie Press, Moylan, Pa., November 1977. Reviewed by Margot Ensign.

It is difficult to say who is the more fortunate in this biography: the author Walter Kahoe who had the advantage of a close acquaintance of 50 years with his subject, as student, faculty member at Antioch, and later as personal adviser at the TVA; or Arthur Morgan, to have had such a competent yet tender biographer. I myself watched the progress of this book for about 8 years, first as manuscripts which I read aloud to Arthur Morgan (after 1970 his sight and hearing were failing) and then this summer as page proofs.

This is a highly readable account of Arthur Morgan's long and complex life.

The author is at home with his subject and deals briskly with his material. The story moves swiftly forward, first in the small frontier town of St. Cloud, Minn., where we are very soon sharing Arthur Morgan's trials in the classroom and shortly afterwards his youthful adventures in Colorado--his search for identity, perhaps?

Then we are into his early engineering ventures at the turn of the century, especially his first tangles with political influence, in the case of the Florida land scandal, while he was working for the Drainage Department of the United States Department of Agriculture from 1907-1910. Leaving there, he soon built up a successful engineering career, both in Memphis and Dayton, and became a pioneer in flood-control design after the Dayton flood in 1913, when the Miami Conservancy District was formed.

Now his interest in innovative education came to the fore, first with the Moraine Park School in Dayton (1917) and then with the resurrection of Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The most different part of his new program there was the introduction of the cooperative "work-study" program. During his presidency, Antioch rose from a moribund college of 50 students to become one of the first five ranking liberal arts colleges in the U.S.

After 12 years at Antioch came President Roosevelt's invitation to become chairman of the TVA. In some ways, this is the climax of the story. At this point the biographer might have said, "Childe Roland to the dark tower came." More space--4 chapters or over one-third of the book--is given to Morgan's 5 years at the TVA (1933-38) than to any other part of his biography. It

seems as if all that preceded this moment was only in preparation for this, his greatest venture.

The drama of his years at the TVA--tremendous accomplishments, disappointments, disagreements--is played out in this high relief in stronger, more forceful tones than the rest of the biography. Like a Greek tragedy, the TVA drama reaches its climax in the penultimate act--chapter 10, the third on the TVA--with the dismissal of Arthur Morgan by FDR in 1938, and winds down to the conclusion of Arthur Morgan's part in the TVA through the long, weary months of Congressional Hearings.

Then we come back to Yellow Springs and the founding of Community Service and the writing of 20 books. During this time, too, there were many journeys abroad--Mexico, Finland, Ghana, India, and much activity in the Yellow Springs community (chapter 12).

For myself, I find Chapter 12 the only unsatisfactory part of the biography that I would like to see expanded into two or three chapters. Much more could be said, for example, about Arthur Morgan and the Senecas and his appearance on the Today Show; or the annual conferences of Community Service; or his classes on Community at Antioch during the 1950's, or his continuing influence and efforts in his own community. There is no mention of his strenuous work on behalf of the Senior Citizens in Yellow Springs: the founding of their centre in 1959 by his efforts, and later the construction of low cost housing for them in 1961.

So the narrative winds to its close, with Arthur Morgan's passing in 1975. But then follow four chapters, where Walter

Kahoe discusses in some detail Arthur Morgan's early searching and questioning, his writing, his interest in biology, and finally his philosophy. Thus the story is allowed to go briskly forward without digressions or analyses, and the reader can absorb these later at a more leisurely pace.

The author has dealt gently with his subject. There is no negative criticism, only perhaps a whimsical hint of something that might have been. (p. 112)

In simple and straightforward style, Walter Kahoe skillfully weaves together the many different strands of Arthur Morgan's life, with a close attention to exact and accurate detail, and places these against a national background, as at the beginning of Chapter 7 on the depression years.

The narrative is refreshingly free from "documentation". Though there are frequent quotes, they flow in and through the narrative as if the author were conversing with his subject (p. 5). Walter Kahoe has indeed done an excellent piece of work: highly readable, gently whimsical at times, clearly analytical at others, yet always placing his subject objectively in his background and environment.

This book Arthur Morgan: A Biography and Memoir may be purchased from Community Service for \$7.95 plus 10% for postage and handling.

READERS WRITE

More Concerning Field Theories

The articles by Robert Pryor and Griscom Morgan in the last (Sept/Oct) Newsletter interest me. Pryor suggests that high population densities are harmful because of interaction of individual human electromagnetic fields. Morgan agrees with the field idea but

favors Einsteinian field theory for a theoretical model of human fields. Since I do not understand either theory I cannot judge the proposed models. However, I do think that this idea of 'social fields' has great potential in sociology and wonder whether other readers have thought along these lines.

Various researchers have used concepts of social distance and comfort zones around people. These are phenomena of daily experience whether they are based on field activity or a combination of physical sense experiences. You unconsciously space yourself during conversation or when sitting down in a bus. I suggest that this social spacing stems from the same cause as the feelings of distaste and distress toward high density city living. We need to both observe this phenomenon in our daily experience and develop explanations such as Pryor and Morgan suggest. --Don Hollister, Yellow Springs

OPENING AT VALE COMMUNITY

The Vale Community has developed over the past 25 years with its commitment to harmony with nature and concern for the wider society. It is located on 40 acres of beautiful wooded land just outside Yellow Springs. The five member families live in separate homes and have separate family incomes. They manage the land and utilities together. There is land available for families wishing to raise most of their own vegetables. Two members have conducted a small alternative school for kindergarten through third grade over the past 24 years.

Right now a three-bedroom lower duplex apartment is available to rent for \$135 a month plus utilities. It is for a family interested in country living, a fine place to rear children and to share concerns for both nature and the well-being of family relationships. After a residency of not less than one year but not more than three years, the Vale Community would like a non-member family to consider whether it wishes to become a member. For further information, write Jane Morgan, P.O. Box 207, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

VISIT FROM BELA BANERJEE

Bela Banerjee, nurse from Mitraniketan, will be visiting Yellow Springs November 18-22nd. Anyone wishing to help us pay for her transportation of \$104, please send your checks earmarked for this purpose to Community Service, Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

CONSULTATION

Community Service makes no set charge for consultation services formal or informal, but can only serve through contributions and memberships of its friends and those it helps. For consultations we suggest a minimum contribution equal to that of the user's hourly wage for an hour of our time.

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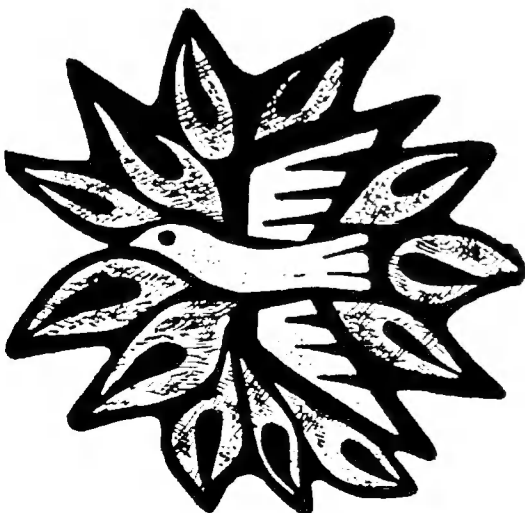
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